

ROWING GUIDANCE DURING COVID-19



Summary of Guidance

You will be aware that the Welsh Government have completed their review of Coronavirus restrictions and have made significant easings. Please find enclosed below our latest guidance to reflect this.

The attached guidance allows for the resumption of adult crew rowing, and this is a very welcome development. Our guidance in this area is based on the most recently published sports guidance on Alert level 3 and below from Welsh Government, which dates from December 2020.

We are expecting updated guidance over the next few weeks, but Welsh Rowing and our interpretation of the guidance currently in place means crew boat rowing for adults may return but must adhere to the risk mitigations in the information within this update, to reduce the risk generated by the breach of social distancing that crew boat rowing entails.

We hope that clubs will continue to take the measured, responsible approach to the return of sport that we have seen so far in rowing in Wales to protect themselves and their members. Clubs must ensure their risk assessment and mitigation processes are comprehensive before any activity recommences, and these should be reviewed regularly to ensure any changes that need to be made are documented.

We are still waiting for more clarity on events from Welsh Government through Welsh Rowing's open dialogue and in particular the difference between 'outdoor organised activity' and 'events', we believe that inter-club private matches that stay within the current guidelines on numbers are now permitted (and clubs should ensure they are insured for these if they wish to take part).

However, larger multi-club events may need to wait for the completion of a series of test events across sport and the arts to be held in May and early June this year before Welsh Government guidelines will permit these to take place. Welsh Rowing have asked for a timeline on events from Welsh Government, and any further information we get from this process will be passed on and those clubs with planned events within the WSR calendar will be advised ASAP.

Introduction

Welsh Sea Rowing will continue to ensure that the advice outlined for its members is up to date but the situation and guidance from Welsh Government is regularly changing. Rowers and clubs should always ensure they check relevant guidance from the Welsh Government, Local Authorities, and local waterway authorities. The latest advice from Welsh Government can be found [here](#).

Public health remains the number one priority

For more information on coronavirus (Covid-19) we recommend visiting the following additional websites:

- [Welsh Government coronavirus information](#)
- [World Health Organisation coronavirus information](#)

Additions and changes to 29 March 2021 Advice

There will be a further relaxation in Covid-19 restrictions in Wales, from 00.01 on 24th and 26th April 2021. The key areas of impact are as follows:

24th April - 6 people from 6 different households can meet outdoors - for individual exercise

26th April - Organised outdoor activities for groups of up to 30 adults including crew boats

Details of current guidance changes

Household Meeting

Six people from up to six different households can meet outdoors (with children under 11 and carers exempted) from **24th April**. Clubs can now look to increase the amount of people within individual exercise slots to reflect this change.

Organised outdoor activities for adults including crew boats

From **26th April**, organised outdoor activities for groups of up to 30 adults can now recommence.

We believe the current guidance and transmission rates allow for adult crew boat rowing in Wales to return, providing there is strict adherence to the below mitigations to reduce the transmission risk caused by the breaching of social distancing guidelines.

If clubs do wish to run crew rowing sessions for adults, they are advised to put the following mitigations into place:

- 1) The club's risk assessment is reviewed to include crew boats including specific regard to coxes and re-assessed on a timely basis to take account of the changing guidance.
- 2) Clubs operate an opt-in system for crew boat rowing including the individual acknowledging they may be asked to isolate should a crew member be tested positive and the risk of transmission in a crew boat is higher than in a single.
- 3) Clubs should recognise that some individuals may not wish to return to crew boat rowing at this time or may retract their opt-in at any time and should plan for the inclusion of these individuals within sessions.
- 4) Clubs should ensure participants complete a self-assessment of Covid-19 symptoms and complete a written dynamic pre-row risk assessment before each session which considers cold water shock syndrome.
- 5) Clubs keep clear records of crew boat make-up and proactively ask members of boats where members have positive tests to refrain from rowing at the club ahead of any Test, Trace, Protect request.
- 6) Clubs keep the same crew rowing together wherever possible, do not mix crews if avoidable and rowers to retain their positions during each session to avoid cross contamination within the boat.

- 7) Clubs ensure 2m distancing is adhered to apart from when in the boat together e.g., on the beach, slipways, landing stage and whilst de-briefing etc.
- 8) Clubs ensure all necessary (well maintained, serviced and in date) safety equipment is present for the session and cleaned as per the previous guidelines, before and after each use.
- 9) Clubs should ensure all personal hygiene measures are followed, before and after each session.
- 10) Crews should avoid out of sync rowing, and where this cannot be avoided, e.g., a rower is sitting the boat, then they should consider wearing a face mask. Coaches should consider which position in the boat they sit, to reduce transmission risk and clubs should consider the wearing of life jackets for all crew members.
- 11) Clubs should ensure crews return gently to crew rowing given the lengthy break from this activity.
- 12) Crew members should consider wearing masks until they are within the boat, removing these for exercise and putting in an individual/personal Ziplock bag for each person within the boat, and then putting them back on before exiting the boat.
- 13) Crews should avoid shouting.
- 14) Coxes involved in rowing activity should use a face mask and eye protection in a stern loader and a face mask in a bow loader.
- 15) Crew members should avoid face to face contact where possible when in the boat, avoiding turning to speak to the rower behind for example.
- 16) With Covid case numbers currently very low in Wales, clubs may wish to consider a staggered return to crew boats starting with smaller boats, but this is a decision for clubs to consider within the context of their club, its facilities, and members.
- 17) Clubs will need to ensure that the landing stage and any access to the boathouse/facilities is used in a way which prevents different crews from mixing, and this should be the focus of decisions on numbers within sessions. The numbers given by Welsh Government are a maximum, and clubs should consider carefully what numbers they allow per session.

As our advice has been consistently through the pandemic, clubs must be aware that they may need to reverse some elements of provision, at very little notice. Clubs will need to ensure that the person in the role of Covid Officer is supported through this return to adult crew rowing period, and that all members of the club are aware of the person filling this role.

Future Intended Changes are as follows:

3rd May 2021

- Indoor fitness facilities can reopen
- Indoor group activities for up to 15 adults, within social distancing guidelines
- Indoor group activity for under 18s, not limited on numbers but within social distancing guidelines

17th May 2021

The Welsh Government have outlined an intention to move to Alert Level 2 on 17th May. This step may also increase the limits on gatherings outdoors to 50 adults, gathering indoors to 30 adults and see indoor hospitality able to reopen. This will be dependent on the next Welsh Government confirming this step after the elections.

Situation Summary from 00.01 26th April 2021

On-Water/Outside Activity

On-water and outside activity is within Welsh Government guidance provided group size (30) restrictions for adults are followed. Crew boat rowing is now within guidelines for all provided strict adherence to the above mitigations.

Indoor Gym Areas (S&C rooms, Erg rooms)

These areas should remain closed.

Club Facilities (Changing Rooms, Toilets, Bar areas)

Toilets are now permitted to reopen with mitigations in place. All other facilities should remain closed.

Training Group Size

From **24th April** - 6 people from 6 households with social distancing in place. Unlimited numbers for Under 18's, but with regard to social distancing.

From **26th April** - Groups of up to 30 adults for organised activity in addition to the above.

School Rowing

Young people within bubbles formed under Welsh Government guidelines should follow school guidelines and risk assessments, including for crew rowing.

Travel

There are no limits to travel in the UK currently. Clubs should be aware of restrictions on overnight stays for leisure in England.